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ABSTRACT

Research into school reform has established that effective leadership is essential for developing high-performing schools. But across the country public school districts are reporting a decrease in applications for administration positions. Using data from Connecticut, this paper examines administrators' and teachers' perceptions of administrative work and explores policy initiatives to recruit and retain educators for leadership positions. In Connecticut, in 1990, the median number of applicants for principal positions was 60, for superintendent, 49. By 2000, the median number of applicants for principal positions was 24, for superintendent, 16. The problem in Connecticut parallels that in the nation. The data used in this paper were drawn from personnel files in 1999 and 2000 (demographic data); the state certification file, which contained endorsements educators received; and a survey of administrators and teachers conducted in 2001. (The survey questions are included in an appendix.) From the data, the paper establishes the following strategies to address the shortage problem: (1) align compensation with job responsibilities; (2) redefine leadership roles within schools; (3) clarify school board and school administration roles; and (4) provide professional support and development opportunities for new and current administrators. (Contains 5 tables and 18 references.) (WFA)

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The Administrator Paradox: More Certified, Fewer Apply

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In response to the concern over national and state projections of teacher shortages, much has been written about the importance of having competent, caring teachers in every classroom to ensure that all children receive a quality education. Reported teacher shortages have overshadowed an equally important need, the supply of well-qualified, effective principals for every school and superintendents for every district. Without effective school and district level leadership, the nation's public schools will not be able to advance the educational reform initiatives begun during the last decade.

The resurgence of the importance of school and district level leadership is currently energizing the policy debate around educational reform. Over the last three decades the public school reform lens has focused squarely on the quality and structure of leadership as one of the two most important factors contributing to improving student academic achievement. The school reform research clearly establishes that effective leadership, coupled with quality teachers, is essential for developing high-performing schools. However, currently there is an emerging crisis in educational administration. Public school districts across the country are reporting a decrease in applications from well-qualified applicants for public school administration positions. School and district level leadership positions have become less and less attractive over the last decade. Using data from Connecticut, this paper examines current administrators' and teachers' perceptions of administrative work and explores policy initiatives to prepare, recruit, support, and retain high quality public school educators for leadership positions.

Changing Context of School Leadership in the United States

The effective schools research of the 1970s and 1980s found that the building principal was central in providing the leadership needed to create high performing schools that were both efficient and effective organizations. The focus of effective schools evolved during the 1990s to emphasize accountability, in particular accountability for improving students' academic performance. The shift in emphasis changed the nature of many aspects of principals' work and how they deployed time to various managerial and instructional responsibilities. The new cadre of principals in effective schools had strong task orientation and interpersonal skills, continually focusing the school on improving curriculum and instruction, rather than solely on school management issues. While the management of the school could not be left to happenstance, school leaders who were effective had to be able to make decisions and balance their responsibilities in a manner that provided teachers with a well-organized environment in which to teach while keeping the improvement of teaching and learning at the center of everyone's attention (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Stronge, 1993).

The context in which public school administrators work today has changed radically from what it was two decades ago. Today's schools are more complex, dynamic and technologically advanced organizations. Instructional decision-making is now decentralized in many districts and parents and teachers are more directly involved in the decisions that are made about curriculum and instruction. Federal, state, and local governments have raised standards for student academic achievement while many students arrive at schools with greater nonacademic needs and academic challenges.

School leaders are required to be knowledgeable about and comply with an expanding progression of federal and state regulations. As a result, school leaders must possess a wider array of knowledge, skills and personal qualities to advance their organizations.

Doud and Keller (1998) examined the issue of principals' expanding responsibilities in a study of elementary school principals conducted for the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). Principals were asked to rate the direction (increase, no change, decrease) of change over the past three years in their responsibilities for eleven different areas that are components of most principals' work. The areas were: curriculum development, development of instructional practices, fiscal decision-making, personnel selection, personnel evaluation, working with site-based councils/constituencies, planning/implementation of site-based staff development, attention to issues of potential legal liability, working with social service agencies, marketing/politics to generate support for the school and education, and participation in district policy development. Less than 10 percent responded that their responsibilities had decreased in any of the areas. Slightly more than half reported no change in their responsibilities in three areas: personnel selection (56.5%), personnel evaluation (55.8%), and participation in district policy development (55.0%). In contrast, more than half reported increases in the level of their responsibilities for the other eight areas with the greatest proportion (70.0%) for 'marketing/politics to generate support for school and education.' Principals have taken on greater responsibility in many areas of their work, yet other responsibilities have not been reduced to compensate. The changes in responsibilities require more time and, in some cases, new skills they have not acquired.

A National Association of Secondary Principals (NASSP) survey reported that problems associated with job responsibilities were not restricted to elementary school principals. Like the elementary school principal, the high school principal's role is also evolving in concert with changing national, state, and local expectations that emphasize increased standards for student performance and high-stakes testing. Secondary school principals, whose workweek often extends beyond sixty hours not including activities and school events, must be instructional team-leaders as well as effective managers. Yet principals report they are deluged with managerial tasks and paperwork that fill hours of their time. The activities divert time from responsibilities such as assessing and identifying needs, prioritizing and planning, and communicating with stakeholders, which are essential to curricular change and instructional innovation directed at improving students' academic performance (Schiff, 2001). The NAASP report noted that "Although high school principals are hard-working, highly committed, and dedicated to the business of teaching and learning they report spending much of their time and energy carrying out functions that have little to do with student learning, effective teaching, or creating a climate conducive to both of these. The role of the principal, as presently structured, is … that of a manager mostly engaged in urgent activities" (p. 31).

Public school superintendents face challenges similar to those school principals are encountering. A national survey found that they have experienced an increase in responsibilities and mandates in their districts without sufficient resources to carry them out (89%); they must routinely manage public criticism and political turmoil (81%); and

the demands of the job have forced them to make compromises in their family and personal life (84%). Superintendents were asked to rate how they spent their professional time on ten aspects of their job (legal issues and litigation, parent issues, collective bargaining/union issues, funding and budgeting, district politics, discipline problems, improving student achievement, teacher quality and training, parent organizations, and conferences and professional meetings). In general, a large proportion of the superintendents indicated they devoted 'about the right amount of time' to each aspect. Fifty percent indicated 'legal issues and litigation' got more attention than it deserved, while 'teacher quality and training' (34%), 'improving student achievement' (27%) and 'conferences and professional meetings' (26%) got less attention than deserved (Farkas et al., 2001).

The effective public school administrator is expected to be a visionary, communicator, facility manager, team-builder, disciplinarian, supervisor, problem-solver, legal expert, fiscal administrator, politician, fund-raiser, in addition to being a school or district instructional leader, -- and is held accountable for the effective execution of each distinct aspect of the job (Educational Research Services, 2000). The school administrator's work is currently characterized by role expansion and greater accountability, often with less autonomy in getting the job done as the participation of other stakeholders has increased in school and district level decision-making. It is not surprising that administrators increasingly report greater job-related stress (Olsen, 1990).

The new generation of public school administrators will need to be prepared with the skills to effectively manage their school organization as instructional leaders, and the interpersonal skills to work with the many constituents in the school community. A critical challenge for principals and superintendents will be working effectively with a dual generation teaching staff -- inducting and developing early career teachers while building upon the experience of and revitalizing veteran teachers -- in order to move the school and district toward the higher levels of academic achievement that the public is demanding.

National Demographics and Projections for the Future

Over the next decade, student enrollments are projected to increase and a large proportion of the baby-boom generation of public school teachers and administrators who entered the profession in the late 1960s and early 1970s will approach retirement. The National Center for Education Statistics (1997) projects that during that period of time one quarter of the current teaching force will leave and 2.2 million new teachers will be needed to meet the increasing demand. New school and district level administrators will have to be prepared and hired to fill positions that will be added as school districts expand and current administrators retire. Within the decade, public schools will face an estimated 40 percent turnover of the principals who were born in the baby-boom years and will need about 35,000 new school administrators (Holloway, 2001). During the same period, it is estimated that 8,000 of the 14,000 public school districts in the nation will search for new superintendents (Larsen and Whritner, 2001).

There is mounting concern in communities across the country about who will lead their districts and schools over the next decade. Nationally, school districts have been reporting a decrease in the pool of qualified candidates who apply for school principal positions and the problem is expected to continue. A survey of superintendents found that the degree of perceived shortages varied by type of community and school level. Shortages of well-qualified candidates for principal positions were reported among 52 percent of rural, 45 percent of suburban and 47 percent of urban schools. Shortages of qualified candidates occurred among 47 percent of the elementary schools and 55 percent of the middle and high schools (Education Research Services, 1998, p. 23). The current shortage of candidates for principal positions also portends poorly for the future supply of candidates for district superintendents, since the career path of most superintendents includes service as a school principal.

Nationally, the majority of school and district level administrators has been, and continues to be, white males. The National Center for Education Statistics (2001) reports that the percentage of female principals increased from 25 to 35 percent between the 1987-88 and 1993-94 school years. Over the past decade the percentage of women who have become elementary principals has more than doubled from 20 to 42 percent (Doud and Keller, 1998). Females filled about one in five secondary principalships in 2000, compared with one in eight in 1988 (Milken, 2001). The percentage of minority principals increased from 13 to 16 percent between the 1987-88 and 1993-94 school years, many located in large urban centers (U. S. Department of Education 2001, 1997). While public school leaders have become more diverse over the past decade, the

composition of school principals does not reflect the predominately female (74%) teaching force and the increasingly minority (27%) student population (U. S. Department of Education, 2001).

Economic factors such as salaries and benefits and non-economic factors such as working conditions and job security affect teachers' decisions to pursue public school administration positions and school administrators' decisions to pursue higher-level positions. The effect of such factors on teachers' decisions may differ for male and female teachers and for white and minority teachers. Teachers find some aspects of school administration jobs satisfying, while less satisfying aspects are barriers that districts must contend with in order to attract a pool of well-qualified candidates to apply for administrative positions.

At its April 2001 meeting in San Diego, CA, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) reported that on average, a principal's work year is about 20 percent longer than a teachers', and principals typically work nine-hour workdays and 54-hour workweeks. The scope of public school principal's responsibilities have expanded over the last decade as they are held increasingly accountable for improving the academic performance of the students in their schools, based on standardized testing, along with effectively managing all aspects of the school's operation from maintenance to buses to technology. While the average elementary ($72,587) and middle school ($77,382) principal's salaries kept pace with teachers' salaries nationally, the salaries were not sufficiently high enough to curtail the shortage in applicants that the nation's

public schools currently face, and will continue to face as 40 percent of the nation's principals are projected to leave their positions over the next decade.

A survey of school superintendents who had at least one principal position to fill and also reported a shortage of qualified candidates for the position(s), consistently identified three factors, regardless of the type of community or grade-level organization of the school, that they believe discouraged potential administrators from applying for the principal's position(s): insufficient compensation for the level of responsibilities of the position (60%), high stress level of the job (32%), and excessive amount of time needed to do the job (27%) (Educational Research Services, 2000, p. 26).

Filling School Administration Positions in Connecticut

Connecticut is experiencing similar trends to those found nationally. The current attrition rate for public school administrators is about nine percent annually; for the 2000-01 school year Connecticut public school districts in the state reported 223 vacancies for administrative positions. Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) certification files indicate that more than 5,000 educators working in the state's public schools are certified to hold administrative positions in Connecticut, 3,276 of whom were certified in the last decade. About half of the individuals who are certified worked in public school administration positions in the state during the 2000-01 school year. The evidence is clear that interest in pursuing administrative certification has not waned. In 1989, 343 individuals received their first certificate as an intermediate administrator, the certification Connecticut requires for all public

school administrators below superintendent; 489 did so a decade later in 1999-2000. The number of individuals first certified as administrators in 1999-2000 was more than twice the number of educators needed to fill the 2000-01 vacancies.

Although Connecticut has the largest number of teachers certified as school administrators in its history, its public school districts are finding increasing difficulty in attracting well-qualified candidates for school and district level administrative positions. The median number of applications that districts received in 1990 for principal positions was 60 and for superintendent was 49; by 2000 the median number of applicants per principal vacancy declined to 24 and per superintendent vacancy declined to 16. In Connecticut the decrease in the size of applicant pool was most pronounced for urban districts where the median number of applicants per principal and superintendent vacancy declined to seven by 2000. The problem of a limited pool of candidates willing to pursue public school administration positions is likely to intensify over the next decade if current conditions persist in public schools.

Research Needed

Much of the recent research on public school administrators has focused on the principal. This research summarized in this paper expands upon prior research. First, it examines the factors that affect career decisions of several levels of public school administrators, assistant principal through superintendent, as well as those of current teachers in non-administrative positions who are certified to be public school administrators and, as a result, are in the public school administrator pipeline. By understanding the aspects of

the work that make public school administrative positions attractive or unattractive, state and district level educational leaders and policy makers will be better informed to develop appropriate policies and change operational practices in order to increase the appeal of public school leadership positions.

Second, the paper explores changes in policy and practice that could be initiated at the district and state levels. These policies and practices would be designed to expand the supply of educators willing to pursue administrative positions and reduce the demand for new administrators needed to replace those who retire early or leave due to job stress and burnout.

Theoretical Framework

Zabalza, Turnbull and Williams' 1970 work applying human capital theory to model occupational choice provides the theoretical framework for this research. In a study of teachers in England, they examined how economic factors affected teachers' career decisions. The findings suggest that while monetary considerations are important in teachers' decisions, non-monetary factors affect their career decisions as well. Teachers treat career choice decisions as investment decisions; they weigh the benefits and the costs of alternative courses of action in making career decisions.

In studies of Michigan and Connecticut public school teachers returning to teach in public schools after a career interruption, Beaudin (1995, 1993a, & 1993b) found that teachers respond like other members of the workforce in making that career decision.

Financial considerations like salary and benefits are important to their decisions to return to the classroom and return to the districts they left. However, wide ranges of non-monetary factors influence the decisions they make. These include: family responsibilities, type of assignment, location of the position, job security, student population, district resources, school leadership, and familiarity with the program and staff. The weight of each factor depends on the nature of the individual teacher's needs.

Teachers working in public schools who have invested in administrative certification face a career decision: Do they stay in the classroom or leave it to take an assistant principal, principal, or other administrative position which would allow them to apply their recently acquired knowledge? Administrators face a similar decision: Do they continue in the same administrative position or move to a different district and/or position or return to the classroom?

Research Questions

As part of a comprehensive study of educator supply and demand, the Connecticut State Department of Education conducted a survey of current and prospective administrators to learn about the state's pipeline into public school administration positions and the personal and positional characteristics that affect educators' career decisions. The survey was administered in April 2001. The study of the administrator pipeline examined four broad questions:

1. What are the sources from which Connecticut public schools draw entry-level administrators (assistant principals and principals)?

2. What is the interest level of teachers holding administrator certification and current administrators in seeking first or new administrative positions?
3. What factors attract educators to or detract educators from considering first or new public school administrator positions?
4. What policy initiatives can the state and local districts employ to retain current administrators and attract a larger, more diverse pool of candidates to public school administrative positions in Connecticut?

Data Sources and Methods

The data for the study are drawn from three sources. The first is CSDE 1999 and 2000 Staff files for all public school educators employed in the state during the two school years. It contains demographic characteristics, experience, education, professional assignment, school level, and salary information for all educators. The second is the CSDE Certification file which contains all endorsements that educators have been issued and the date issued. The third source of data is a survey (Appendix A), which examined the questions listed above and was administered in April, 2001 to a sample of 731 current administrators and 527 teachers (who had received administration certification within the previous three years). The sample of currently employed administrators was randomly selected, stratified by administrative position (superintendent, assistant/associate superintendent, principal (elementary, middle, high), assistant principal) with over sampling for minority and female administrators. The sample of teachers with administrator certification was selected randomly. The total response rate was 33.2%, 29% for administrators and 39% for teachers.

This paper will provide summary statistics and tables for the preliminary analysis of the data.

Connecticut Public School Administrator and Teacher Characteristics and Salary

Table 1 summarizes selected demographic characteristics and salary statistics for all administrators and teachers employed in Connecticut public schools at the beginning of the 2000-01 school year. Other administrators include educators employed in positions that require administrator certification such as director of pupil personnel services, department chairs, directors of special programs, and curriculum specialists.

Table 1: Connecticut Public School Administrator and Teacher Characteristics and Salaries: 2000-01

	Superintendents	Assistant Superintendents	Principals	Assistant Principals	Other Administrators	Classroom Teachers
Total Number	153	97	976	695	709	38,566
Average Age	55.2	52.2	51.3	48.5	51.0	43.7
% Over 55 Years of Age	45.8	24.7	23.1	16.9	22.8	12.1
% Male	77.8	63.9	50.5	50.9	42.7	26.9
% White	95.4	89.7	88.5	81.5	92.2	93.3
Average CT Experience	19.5	21.0	21.7	19.1	19.8	13.6
Minimum Salary	$79,120	$74,600	$55,117	$52,018	$37,895	$20,006
First Quartile Salary	$100,222	$96,220	$85,112	$76,096	$76,396	$31,549
Average Salary***	$113,646	$102,343	$90,527	$82,175	$84,362	$52,832
Median Salary	$109,013	$102,862	$90,383	$81,857	$83,815	$55,506
Third Quartile Salary	$120,174	$107,426	$95,185	$87,940	$92,250	$62,838
Maximum Salary	$225,000	$140,000	$124,232	$115,100	$120,510	$99,809

The typical administrator was a white male in his early fifties, with about 20 years of Connecticut public school experience and earning a salary of about $90,000 in 2000-01. Nearly one in four was at least age 55. In contrast, the typical teacher was a white female

in her early to mid forties with nearly 14 years of Connecticut public school experience and earning a salary in the $50,000 to $55,000 range. About one out of eight teachers was at least 55 years old.

There is considerable variability in salary within administrator assignment groups and between the salaries that teachers and administrators earn. Most public school districts in Connecticut have salary scales based on experience with 12 to 14 steps separating the minimum and maximum salaries for three or four education levels. In 2000-01, the average maximum salary for teachers in the state with a masters' degree was $57,197 or $314 per day based on a 182 day school year consisting of the required 180 student days plus two professional development days. For school principals, the average starting salary was $64,000 or $267 per day based on a 240 day work year (no work on weekends plus 20-25 holidays and/or vacation days). On average, veteran teachers in Connecticut earned $47 per day more than districts paid beginning school principals. The differential is even greater between veteran teachers and new assistant principals, because beginning assistant principals earn an average of eight thousand dollars less than beginning principals.

Sources of Entry Level Administrators: Assistant Principals and Principals

The 2000-01 Staff File was used to identify educators who were employed as assistant principals and principals during that school year. The file was merged against the 1999-2000 Staff File to determine the number of these administrators who were in the same position and district, the

same position in a different district, different positions, or not employed in a public school position during the 1999-2000 year. Tables 2 and 3 identify the sources of the new hires.

Assistant Principals

For the 2000-01 school year, Connecticut public school districts employed 695 assistant principals, 209 (30%) in elementary schools, 195 (28%) in middle schools, and 291 (42%) in high schools. Of those, 499 (71.8%) were assistant principals in the same district the previous year and 196 were either new to the assistant principal position and/or new to their district as an assistant principal. Table 2 below summarizes the sources from which the 196 new and new-to-district assistant principals were drawn, by their 2000-01 school level. Percents in the table indicate proportions of the row totals. Thirty-three (16.8%) of the newly hired assistant principals held administrative positions the previous year, 18 in the same district. Eleven (5.6%) of the newly hired assistant principals were assistant principals in different Connecticut public school districts and 22 (10.2%) were principals or in some other administrative position. The prior experience of 16 (8.1%) who were not employed in Connecticut public schools is unknown.

Table 2: Sources of New Assistant Principals

	Administrator		Teacher		Not in CT Public Schools	Total
	Same CT	Different CT	Same CT	Different CT		
Assistant Principals						
Elementary	9 (11.4%)	5 (6.3%)	35 (44.3%)	24 (30.4%)	6 (7.6%)	79
Middle	3 (5.8%)	1 (1.9%)	26 (50.0%)	17 (32.7%)	5 (9.6%)	52
High	6 (9.2%)	9 (13.8%)	29 (44.6%)	16 (24.6%)	5 (7.7%)	65
Total	18 (9.2%)	15 (7.6%)	90 (45.9%)	57 (29.1%)	16 (8.2%)	196

Districts provided many opportunities for classroom teachers to enter public school administration as assistant principals. One hundred forty-seven (75.0%) of the new assistant principals districts hired for the 2000-01 school year were Connecticut public school teachers the

previous year. Half (50.0%) of all new middle school assistant principals worked as teachers in the same district the previous year. Districts were more likely to fill middle school (82.7%) assistant principal positions with educators who had worked as teachers the previous year than elementary (74.7%) or high school (69.2%) positions.

Principals

For the 2000-01 school year, Connecticut public school districts employed 976 principals, 673 in elementary schools, 158 in middle schools, and 145 in high schools; 139 (14%) were not principals in the same district during the previous school year. Table 3 below identifies the sources from which the 139 new and new-to-district principals were drawn for the 2000-01 school year. Overall, 57.6 percent were administrators in state public schools, 23.7 percent of the new principals were Connecticut public school classroom teachers the previous year, and 18.7 percent were not employed in the state's public school system.

Table 3: Sources of New Principals

	Administrator		Teacher		Not in CT Public Schools	Total
	Same CT	Different CT	Same CT	Different CT		
Principals						
Elementary	28 (29.2%)	21 (21.9%)	19 (19.8%)	10 (10.4%)	18 (18.8%)	96
Middle	9 (50.0%)	6 (33.3%)	1 (5.5%)	1 (5.5%)	1 (5.5%)	18
High	7 (28.0%)	9 (36.0%)	1 (4.0%)	1 (4.0%)	7 (28.0%)	25
Total	44 (31.7%)	36 (25.9%)	21 (15.1%)	12 (8.6%)	26 (18.7%)	139

The sources of new principals varied by school level. Districts drew a large proportion (30.2%) of new elementary principals directly from the teaching force, with nearly twice the proportion from within the district (19.8%) as from outside of the district (10.4%). Classroom teachers accounted for smaller proportions of new middle school principals (11.0%) and new high school principals (8.0%), suggesting that districts preferred new secondary building-level administrators

who had prior administrative experience. Over half (51.1%) of the new elementary principals were Connecticut public school administrators the previous year, compared with 83 percent of the middle school principals and 64.0 percent of the high school principals. Nearly one in five of the new principals (18.7%) was not employed in Connecticut public schools the previous year. Districts were less likely to fill middle school principal positions (5.5%) with educators who had not worked in a Connecticut public school position the previous year than elementary principal (18.8%) or high school principal (28.0%) positions.

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The respondents were nearly evenly divided between administrators and teachers holding administrator certification, who were not employed in positions requiring the certification; 215 (51.4%) were administrators and 203 (48.6%) were teachers. Of the respondents, 55.5 percent were female, compared with 70 percent of the state's professional educators, and 80.5 percent were white, compared with 93 percent of state educators. The large majority, 84.9 percent, completed their graduate preparation for administrator certification at a Connecticut public (62.9%) or private (22.0%) college or university. The educators were asked to identify the importance of four reasons for completing course requirements for administrator certification, using a scale from zero (not at all) to four (definitely). The following proportions identified each reason as a three or four: to fulfill the state's continuing certification requirement (24.0%), to move to a higher salary grade (55.1%), to become an administrator in the near term (73.9%), to become an administrator in the future (68.5%).

A portion of the respondents clearly had no intention of ever becoming school administrators even though they had completed the required degree and obtained certification; 15.5 percent had little or no interest in becoming an administrator in the next year and 22.6 percent indicated they had little or no interest in becoming an administrator at any time in the future. These teachers felt administrative work would take time away from their own families, limit their work with children, and reduce their job security. They also noted that the salary differential between their current position and an administrative position was inadequate and they had no interest in leaving their current district or increasing their commute.

Survey Results: Interest in Applying for Public School Administration Positions

Administrators and teachers seeking administrative positions limited their searches to a small number of districts. During the previous year, 152 (39.0%) of the respondents applied for administrative positions; 52.8 percent applied to only one school district, 33.0 percent applied to from two to four different districts, 12.0 percent applied to between five and ten districts, and only 2.1 percent applied to more than ten districts.

More than half, 238 (61.0%), reported they did not apply for administrator positions during the previous year. An open-ended question asked why they had not applied and the following were the reasons cited most often for not doing so: satisfied with current position (50.3%), salary and benefits not commensurate with time and responsibilities (10.4%), unsuccessful at previous attempts to secure positions (9.8%), and too close to retirement (6.6%).

A survey of current Connecticut public school administrators and teachers, recently certified as administrators, was designed to determine the amount of interest of each group in applying for first or new administrative positions. Questions addressed their current status, and the types of positions they would apply for and types of districts they would apply to in the future. Table 4 summarizes administrators' and teachers' responses.

Table 4: Search for Administration Positions by Current Administrator and Teacher Survey Respondents

	Current Administrators		Teachers Holding Administrator Certification	
Search Status				
Applications on File	30	(15.2%)	49	(25.0%)
Will Apply Next Year	48	(26.1%)	82	(42.3%)
Will Apply Within 5 Years	96	(53.6%)	104	(54.7%)
Positions With Applications on File				
Superintendent	3	(1.4%)	0	(0.0%)
Assistant Superintendent	8	(3.7%)	5	(2.5%)
Principal	19	(8.8%)	24	(11.8%)
Assistant Principal	7	(3.3%)	40	(19.7%)
Other Administrator	7	(3.3%)	21	(10.5%)
Applying Within Five Years				
Superintendent	28	(13.0%)	4	(2.0%)
Assistant Superintendent	50	(23.3%)	14	(6.9%)
Principal	74	(34.4%)	46	(22.7%)
Assistant Principal	14	(6.5%)	89	(43.8%)
Other Administrator	31	(14.4%)	88	(43.3%)
District Types Considered				
Large Urban	76	(51.7%)	76	(47.8%)
Small City	106	(70.7%)	120	(73.2%)
Suburban	135	(87.1%)	136	(83.4%)
Rural	91	(64.5%)	98	(64.5%)

Thirty (15.2%) of the current administrators had applications on file for new positions in April 2001, considering a total of 44 positions. The positions they sought included: superintendent (3), assistant superintendent (8), principal (19), assistant principal (7), and other (7) administrative positions such as curriculum director or specialist. Forty-eight

(26.1%) indicated they were likely to or would definitely apply for a different position within the next year and 96 (53.6%) would do so in the next five years. The positions they would consider in the future included: superintendent (28), assistant superintendent (50), principal (74), assistant principal (14), and other (31) administrative positions (director of pupil support services, curriculum specialists, program directors).

Some responses varied by administrator position. Half of the superintendent and assistant superintendent respondents indicated they would consider a different position in the future. The largest proportion (50.0%) of the female principal respondents indicated that if they applied for another position it would be a principal position, while the largest percentage of male principal respondents would target an assistant superintendent position. Twenty percent of the male principals contemplated becoming a superintendent in the future, while only 13% of the female principals did.

Current administrators reported greater preference for applying to suburban (87.1%) and small city (70.7%) districts than to large cities (51.7%) or rural (64.5%) districts. Preferences for pursuing positions in the four types of communities was fairly consistent across administrative assignment groups, although principals reported a higher preference for positions in rural districts (83.3%) than other administrators, and female administrators were less likely to consider positions in urban districts than male administrators.

Six percent of the teacher respondents were former administrators who had returned to the classroom and about 10 percent had unsuccessfully applied for administrative positions in the past, citing their lack of experience as a reason for not being successful in securing a position. Forty-nine (25.0%) of the teacher respondents applied for a total of 90 administrative positions during the 2000-01 school year. The positions for which they applied included: assistant superintendent (5), principal (24), assistant principal (40), and other (21) administrative positions such as department chair, curriculum coordinator, or director of a program. For the future, 88 (41.3%) indicated that they would most likely or definitely be interested in applying for an administrative position during the next year and 104 (54.7%) would do so within five years. Their targeted next career moves were: superintendent (4), assistant superintendent (14), principal (46), assistant principal (89), department chair (89), and other administrative positions (30) such as director of special education or district-wide subject area coordinator. Like current administrators, they showed a preference for submitting applications to suburban (83.4%) and small cities (73.2%) over large cities (47.8%) and rural districts (64.5%).

Survey Responses: Attractors to and Detractors from Pursuing and Accepting Public School Administration Positions

The survey asked administrators and prospective administrators to describe three factors, in order of importance, that would positively contribute to their own decisions to apply for and accept administrative positions and three factors that would negatively affect their decisions. A weighted sum was calculated to determine the rank order of the attractor and detractor responses. There was considerable consistency between current

administrators' responses and those of the teachers responding to the survey. Table 5 identifies the number of respondents and percent of total respondents who listed the five attractors and detractors most often cited by both groups.

Table 5: Attractors and Detractors of Administrative Positions for Current Administrators and Teacher Survey Respondents

	Current Administrators		Teachers Holding Administrator Certification	
Attractors				
Commensurate Salary/Benefits	121	(69.0%)	114	(61.6%)
New Challenge	93	(49.7%)	73	(39.0%)
Short Commute	38	(20.3%)	51	(27.3%)
Professional Growth	34	(18.2%)	50	(26.7%)
Supportive Political Climate	56	(29.9%)	38	(20.3%)
Detractors				
Inadequate Salary/Benefits	87	(44.2%)	84	(45.4%)
Negative Political Climate	52	(26.3%)	48	(25.9%)
Longer Commute	49	(24.9%)	72	(38.9%)
Lack of Professional Support	48	(24.4%)	28	(15.1%)
Longer Day and Hours	21	(10.7%)	43	(23.2%)

Respondents clearly identified economic factors as the most important job factor that teachers and current administrators take into account in considering new administrative positions. Salary and benefits weighed in on both the attractor and detractor ends of the continuum. Sixty-nine percent of the current administrator and 61.6 percent of the teacher respondents indicated that a salary and benefits commensurate with the amount of time, both length of workday and length of school year, and level of responsibilities were critical factors in their decision to pursue new positions. Inadequate compensation and benefits were factors that 44.2 percent of the current administrators and 45.4 percent of the teachers cited as reasons for not considering new administrator positions.

Both administrators and teachers weighed two intrinsic aspects of a new position in considering changing positions. Nearly half (49.7%) of the administrators and 39.0 percent of the teachers indicated that an attractive position would need to present a new challenge for them where they could make a difference, while 18.2 percent of the administrators and 26.7 percent of the teachers noted that an attractive new position would provide opportunities for their own professional growth.

Working conditions were also considerations. The political climate within a school and school district was an attractor, if perceived as positive, and a detractor, if perceived as negative. Administrators identified a supportive political climate (29.9%) as the third most important attractor and a negative political climate (26.3%) as their second most important detractor. One current administrator noted that he would not consider a position in a district with " a contentious political climate or dysfunctional board of education." While political climate was an important consideration for teachers, a negative climate (25.9%) was a more highly cited detractor than a positive climate (20.3%) was an attractor. Both groups identified as a detractor the concern over the lack of professional support that would be available to them in making the transition to a new administrative positions. A larger proportion of the administrator (24.4%) than teacher (15.1%) respondents cited this factor, perhaps reflecting the lack of support they experienced in their first or current position. Teachers (23.2%) rated the longer work year and workday that most administrative positions require more highly as a detractor than did administrators (10.7%).

The final factor that both groups identified as both an attractor and detractor was logistic in nature and a factor that districts cannot control: the length of the commute. A position that required a longer commute was particularly unattractive to teachers (38.9%) and somewhat less problematic for administrators (24.9%). While positions that required a short commute were attractive to both administrators (20.3%) and teachers (27.3%). For both groups the optimal commute time was thirty minutes or less. This suggests that even within a state as small as Connecticut, the supply pool of prospective administrators is not statewide, but limited to a relatively small geographic radius for each public school district.

Superintendents, as a group, consistently cited an additional consideration as both an attractor and detractor. They weighed the adequacy of resources that the district provided to support its educational programs in their decision to move from their current district to another.

Policy Initiatives

Although there is more than an adequate number of educators who hold public school administrator certification in Connecticut, some districts continue to experience administrator 'shortages,' reporting smaller and less qualified applicant pools applying for their school and district level administrative vacancies than they attracted in the past. It is clear from the survey responses that the incentives that districts currently offer are not sufficient to attract larger numbers of teachers from the classroom to entry-level

administrator positions. Connecticut's data indicate that both economic and non-economic factors affect the decisions that the state's administrators and teachers make when considering a career move.

Resolving the 'shortage' problem will require state and district level efforts beyond merely increasing the number of educators who hold administrator certification through commonly used strategies such as alternate route certification programs, which about half the states in the nation have implemented to provide opportunities for leaders from other sectors to become school and district administrators. On the one hand, initiatives must be designed to expand the supply of educators who sincerely are willing and able to undertake the challenges of public school leadership positions. On the other hand, concurrent proposals need to target reducing demand by decreasing the unattractiveness aspects of administrative positions in order to retain the experienced administrators who may be considering retiring early or returning to the classroom. The final section of this paper proposes four strategies to address these issues: compensation alignment with job responsibilities, school leadership role redefinition, school board and school administration role clarification, and professional support and development opportunities for new and continuing public school administrators.

Salary and Benefits Commensurate with Time and Responsibilities

Salary and benefits are central to administrators' decisions to stay in their current position or move to a new administrator position and teachers' decisions to leave the classroom for an administrative position. For both groups salary and benefits are interrelated with

not only the increase in time that the new position requires but also the added responsibilities, many of which are managerial in nature and unattractive to teachers who are deeply interested in working closely with children and making a difference as instructional leaders. The differential between the annual entry-level salary that administrators earn and that of the typical mid-career teacher are not adequate enough to draw teachers from the classroom to the principal's office. As one teacher respondent explained, "Why would I work more days, make less money per day, devote less time to working with children, and considerably more time to 'administrivia'?"

Clearly, raising administrator salaries to be commensurate to the time requirements and responsibilities the positions appears to be an essential strategy to expand the pool of teachers willing to undertake administrative responsibilities in schools and to reduce demand by retaining pre-retirement administrators for a few more years. The most simplistic approach to resolve the inadequacy of compensation is to increase entry-level salaries for administrators to reflect the amount of additional time that administrators are required to work and the magnitude of the responsibilities they are required to fulfill. Consider the differential needed to eliminate inequities in compensation for the move from classroom teacher to school principal, using Connecticut salary data presented earlier in this paper. To compensate for the 240-day administrator work-year and attract the veteran teacher with a master's degree (the minimum degree administrators must hold in Connecticut) earning the average state maximum salary of $314 per day for the 182 day school-year, would require districts to offer an average beginning salary of $75,360, or an increase of nearly $11,400 over the current average beginning salaries for school

principals. The nearly 20 percent increase, however, does not compensate for added responsibilities or lengthened workday or workweek.

Given the downturn in the economic climate, the magnitude of the needed increase is not likely to be an alternative that most districts will be able to adopt in its entirety, immediately. Yet, districts should consider two proactive strategies. The first consideration is examining their current administrator and teacher salary compensation packages to determine whether or not administrators are commensurately compensated for the time expectations and scope of responsibilities that their positions require and then proactively establish a long-term plan for eliminating inequities. The second is exploring the non-economic changes that can be made in the nature of administrators work to improve work-life quality.

Redefine Leadership Roles Within Schools

Since the adequacy of compensation is also inter-related with the magnitude and types of responsibilities that administrators assume, districts could approach the problem alternatively by distributing leadership responsibilities among a larger number of educators within the school and district to capitalize on their skills and interests, and redefine school leader roles and implement new organizational models to address the instructional, as well as the managerial, aspects of operating a school.

The public school teaching profession's career ladder is 'flat' compared to other career options that today's college graduates might pursue, particularly in fields like

mathematics, the sciences, and technology. Novices begin as 'teachers' and experts retire as 'teachers.' The organization of today's public schools continues to have vestiges of the 19th century industrial model where the principal's role is that of the 'boss' and the teacher is viewed as a life-long assembly-line worker. Connecticut has worked particularly hard over the course of the last decade to attract and induct well-qualified public school teachers. In order to retain talented teachers and increase their interest in school leadership, the state and its public school districts is currently examining teachers' roles so that the new, more entrepreneurial generation of college graduates will see teaching as a professionally fulfilling, rewarding career with induction and professional development experiences that prepare them for a variety of future career paths – including school leadership positions.

The teaching profession's uniform salary scale is based on teachers' years of service and earned degrees, related or unrelated to the improving teaching and learning. The specialized expertise teachers develop over time in areas such as curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development is not recognized and rewarded, as it would be in other work environments. Teachers' specialized knowledge is essential to the on-going improvement of their schools' educational programs. However, teachers who do wish to advance their careers, along with increasing their salaries, currently have limited options: leave the classroom and become a school administrator or leave public school education and enter a new career.

The principal alone cannot improve instruction and manage all aspects of today's complex public schools, nor can teachers in the isolation of their own classrooms. A school organizational model creating a career ladder for teachers would provide leadership experiences for talented teachers, link salaries to performance and increased responsibility, and formally recognize and reward teachers' expertise while building capacity within schools and supporting the instructional leadership role of the principal. By participating in school-based leadership teams, teachers gain ownership in instructional and programmatic decisions and experience as organizational decision makers.

Within Connecticut's changing school leadership context, leadership not only refers to certified school administrators but also to teacher leader roles including mentors, literacy/numeracy leaders, assessment experts, technology specialists, aspirant administrators, curricular leaders, team or grade level leaders, and new and emerging roles that will be developed to enhance public schools' capacity to improve students' academic achievement. District and state educational agencies are beginning to examine policies and practices in order to promote differentiated leadership roles and prepare educators to assume those roles in public schools.

Recognizing that the role of teacher leaders and creating career advancement opportunities to redefine and differentiate the work of teachers and administrators will be central to the success of public school improvement over the course of the next decade.

Public schools accrue several advantages from a shared leadership organizational model. These include:

- recruiting individuals to teaching who thrive on new and challenging opportunities;
- retaining the best and brightest teachers who typically leave teaching within after five years to pursue careers with more advancement opportunities;
- building leadership capacity at the school level and capitalizing on the skills of a team of leaders who contribute a wide range of expertise;
- enhancing the ability of principals to be instructional leaders, working in conjunction with 'teacher-leader' teams sharing a common goal of improving teaching and learning;
- creating a system where teachers advance on a career ladder based on expertise, still maintaining their classroom involvement, which for many was their primary reason for entering the teaching profession;
- increasing the attractiveness of building administrator positions by reducing the chasm between the classroom and the principal's office; and
- creating a professional culture in public schools to position public school education to compete in an economic climate in which there is a high demand for well-educated employees and a historically low unemployment rate.

Districts that offer strong induction and professional development programs to prepare their teachers to take on leadership roles, and then provide appropriate opportunity and compensation for doing so, will reap many benefits. These include higher professional

staff retention, improved instructional support and communication within and across schools, networks of school professionals concentrating their efforts on student learning, greater opportunities to nurture a pool of talented leaders to succeed retiring administrators and for prospective principals to hone their leadership skills while working as part of a decision-making team, and more effective use of the principals' time to focus on what is important in schools: teaching and learning.

The need to provide more purposeful preparation and career ladders for teacher-leaders has become increasingly important as the number of teacher and administrator retirements is projected to escalate over the next decade. The challenge of finding and nurturing school leaders is compounded further within urban districts where effective leadership is even more important if the student achievement gap is to close.

Developing effective career ladders that promote school leadership need not be an expensive endeavor for public school districts. In recent years districts have hired large numbers of new college graduates to fill vacancies and they will hire many additional new college graduates over the next decade to fill over two million positions that will become available. By reallocating part of the funds they save in salary and benefits accounts, as a result of replacing top-of-the-scale retiring teachers with early career teachers, districts could fund new teacher leadership roles and support their induction and professional development of staff in these new roles.

Clarify School Board and School Administration Roles

The Connecticut survey data found that both current administrators and teachers holding administrative certification identified the political climate within a school district as an important factor in seeking or not seeking a new or different administrative position. The lack of clarity in the definition of the roles that the board, superintendent, principals and teachers currently play in the collective leadership of a school district and the delineation of responsibilities are significant sources of tension in some school districts. A clear articulation of well-defined roles and responsibilities, along with a delineation of the relationship among them, is a prerequisite for public school districts to provide the quality of leadership needed to improve the academic performance of all children. The broadening of school leadership, as described in the previous section, not only is beneficial for creating more career pathways for teachers, but also is important for redesigning the principal and superintendent roles and responsibilities. State and district policy initiatives must be crafted to support and facilitate the redesign of principal and superintendent responsibilities. Involving stakeholders in establishing state guidelines is central to redefining roles and responsibilities of boards of education, superintendents, principals, and teachers, along with ongoing training for boards, and district and school administrators.

Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of central office and building level administrators, and expanding the roles of teacher leaders in schools and school districts, will obviously require the collaboration among principal and superintendent professional organizations, local boards of education, and the State Board of Education. Further, role

re-definitions will necessitate changing how we prepare, support, and develop school leaders. The process will involve collaboration with higher education institutions and the adoption of statewide policies outlining administrator induction, evaluation, and professional development guidelines.

Provide Professional Support and Development Opportunities for New and Continuing Public School Administrators

Current research confirms that support and mentorship play critical roles in retaining and developing teachers and promoting student achievement. Connecticut's well-developed, nationally recognized teacher induction and mentoring program, the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program, has received the Education Commission of the States Award for Outstanding Innovation in Education in 2000, and Connecticut was highlighted in *Quality Counts 2000*, as the leading state in Improving Teacher Quality. A positive consequence of raising standards for teacher preparation and induction was lower attrition for early career teachers compared with other state and national statistics.

Connecticut currently requires public school districts to establish formalized plans for the evaluation and on-going professional development of beginning and veteran teachers, based on state guidelines and Connecticut teacher and student performance standards. Survey data reported in this paper suggest the need to expand policy initiatives to provide beginning administrators with the support they need to become effective school leaders and to provide veteran administrators with ongoing professional development.

To improve the preparation of administrators, current education administration requirements need to be reviewed to insure that the content of programs of study is aligned with the state's professional standards for school administrators. Like the student teaching component of teacher preparation, an internship or practicum component, which NCATE will require in 2003, would provide prospective administrators with multiple experiences to develop their administrative skills under the guidance of experienced administrators.

Similar support, evaluation, and professional development guidelines to those already in place for teachers, are being implemented for Connecticut's new and veteran administrators. The induction and development of new administrators is essential to the improvement of schools and should not be left to chance. The B.E.S.T. program provides a model that could be adapted for new administrators, which would include mentoring, networking opportunities, and statewide seminars addressing pertinent problems and issues that new administrators face. For experienced administrators, the state, working in conjunction with higher education institutions and professional administrator organizations, would develop guidelines for offering on-going standards-based professional development opportunities, which would consistently be linked to evaluation and to student achievement

Promising Developments

As discussed at the beginning of this paper, the diminishing number of school leaders is not unique to Connecticut. In a survey conducted by Interstate School Leader Licensure

Consortium (Jacobson, 2001), 36 out of 38 states reported experiencing superintendent and principal shortages. Most states have begun to initiate strategies to address their shortages. These include: early identification of future school leaders, aspirant and internship programs, alternate routes to licensure and redesigned licensure, compensation adjustment, and modification of administrators' induction, professional development, and evaluation processes.

In 2001, Wallace-Readers Digest Funds initiated *LEADERS Count*, a multi-year state-district collaboration to promote the national reform of education leadership. Connecticut was one of 15 states receiving a *State Action for Education Leadership Project* (SAELP) three-year implementation grant to make innovative, systemic changes in state policies, programs, and administrative practices to strengthen school leadership for improving student performance. Hartford, Connecticut was one of ten public school districts awarded *Leadership for Educational Achievement in Districts* (LEAD) grants, renewable annually for five years, to identify, recruit, and train current and future administrators to become effective educational leaders who focus on improving teaching and learning.

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Appendix A

Survey – Administrators and Potential Administrators

Instructions:
1. Complete the survey responses
2. Refold the survey, pre-stamped face on the outside, and mail back today

This information will be kept in the strictest confidence

Section A: Background Information and Graduate Education:

1. Name (Last, First, Middle Initial):
   _____

2. Social Security Number: _____ - _____ - _____

3. Are you currently employed in a position that requires administrative certification?
   ❑ Yes (Position _____) Date began: _____
   ❑ No (Position: _____)

4. Which of the following degrees, beyond the bachelor's degree, do you hold:
   a. Master's degree (specialty/certification: _____)
   b. Sixth year or Second year Master's degree (specialty/certification: _____)
   c. Doctorate (specialty/certification: _____)

5. a. At which higher education institution did you prepare for your administrator certification?
   _____
   b. In what year were you certified as an administrator? _____
   c. At the time you received your administrator certification, what was your major intention in doing so:
   Use a **0** to **4** scale, where **0 = not at all and 4= definitely to rank your intentions.**
   ___ to complete the master's degree required for certification.
   ___ to complete required course work to move to a higher salary scale.
   ___ to obtain the credentials to definitely become an administrator in the near term.
   ___ to obtain the credentials to possibly become an administrator in the future.

6. a. If you hold a position that does not require administrative certification, describe any of your job responsibilities in which you perform a leadership role in your school or district (ie. mentoring, lead teacher, curriculum leader)?

   b. Do you receive any monetary or time compensation for assuming these responsibilities? Yes No

Section B: Application for Public School Administration Positions

1. Have you ever applied for a public school administrative position? Yes No

2. Did you apply for Connecticut public school administrative positions during the past year?
   Yes ❑ No ❑ (if you answered "**Yes**" complete B-2 through B-5, otherwise go to Question B-6)

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3. What type(s) of administrative position did you apply for?
   a. ❑ Superintendent
   b. ❑ Assistant Superintendent
   c. ❑ Principal
   d. ❑ Assistant Principal
   e. ❑ Department Chair/Director
   f. ❑ Other (specify: _____)

4. To how many Connecticut School districts did you apply? _____

5. Did you apply to any districts that are:

a.	large cities: (e.g. Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport)	Yes ❑	No ❑
b.	small cities (e.g. Middletown, New London, Danbury)	Yes ❑	No ❑
c.	suburban: (e.g. Branford, Avon, Darien)	Yes ❑	No ❑
d.	rural: (e.g. Kent, Woodstock, Stafford)	Yes ❑	No ❑

6. Why did you choose not to look for an administrative position?

Section C: Future Employment Plans

1. a. Do you now have applications on file for Connecticut public school administrative positions? Yes ❑ No ❑

   b. If you answered **"Yes"** what type(s) of position:
   ❑ Superintendent
   ❑ Assistant Superintendent
   ❑ Principal
   ❑ Assistant Principal
   ❑ Department Chair/Director
   ❑ Other (specify: _____)

2, Use a **0** to **4** scale, where **0 = not at all and 4= definitely**, to answer the following questions:
   a. How likely is it that you will apply for an administrative position in the next year? _____

   b. How likely is it that you will apply for an administrative position in the next five years? _____

   c. If you plan to apply, what position will you target in your next career move? _____
   ❑ Superintendent
   ❑ Assistant Superintendent
   ❑ Principal
   ❑ Assistant Principal
   ❑ Department Chair/Director
   ❑ Other (specify: _____)

   d. What other positions would you consider holding in the future?
   ❑ Superintendent
   ❑ Assistant Superintendent
   ❑ Principal
   ❑ Assistant Principal
   ❑ Department Chair/Director
   ❑ Other (specify: _____)

   e. Would you consider applying to any districts that are:

large cities: (e.g. Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport)	Yes ❑	No ❑
small cities (e.g. Middletown, New London, Danbury)	Yes ❑	No ❑
suburban: (e.g. Branford, Avon, Darien)	Yes ❑	No ❑
rural: (e.g. Kent, Woodstock, Stafford)	Yes ❑	No ❑

3. Please identify three factors, <u>in order of importance</u>, that would attract you from your current position to a new or another administrative position:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

4. Please identify three factors, in order of importance, that would discourage you from considering a move from your current position to a new or another administrative position:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

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